

Date: February 25, 2022

Re: 2022 Legislative Session – Policies and Procedures

I. Health of Members During Session

A. Health Monitoring During Session:

Members of the House should monitor their health daily.

In the event that a Member experiences any of the following symptoms, they should not attend until they have visited a doctor and received clearance to return:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

In the event that a Member experiences any of these symptoms after arriving at the Capitol, he or she should immediately leave the Capitol Complex (if present there) and should not return to the Capitol Complex until they have visited a doctor and received clearance to return.

B. Masks:

Masks are optional in the House Chamber and Gallery based on the CDC guidelines and Members and staff are encouraged to wear them when they feel it is appropriate and required to wear them during the five to ten days after a positive Covid-19 test result. *Masks shall comply with House Rules 1.4 and 1.9.*

II. Committee Procedures

A. Committee Rooms:

Members, House staff, and members of the public who enter House committee rooms are not required to wear masks, but it is encouraged when the individual feels that it is appropriate. Committee rooms will operate with full seating.

Committee rooms will have software for Zoom installed on the computers in the rooms to allow for interactivity for Members or other committee hearing participants who are participating in committee meetings virtually. These participants will also be shown on the projection screens in the committee rooms to allow for further transparency.

B. Committee Meetings:

House committee meetings will continue to be live-streamed, as they typically are, and Members will continue to be able to access those live-streams from their offices. House

Media Services will also live-stream House sub-committee meetings, provided that such meetings take place in meeting rooms with streaming technology in place. House Media Services will continue to provide support for conducting committee meetings over Zoom.

Committee chairmen will allow active participation (including voting) by Members in committee meetings via Zoom in rooms that have the capability. It is the responsibility of Members to notify their committee chairmen at least 24 hours prior to the beginning of the committee meeting if they wish to participate in a committee meeting virtually. Members who participate virtually should not have any signage in the background that would violate House Rules. Committee chairmen should make every effort to provide for receiving public commentary and having it entered into the committee record when a meeting is conducted via Zoom.

Committee chairmen are encouraged, where possible, to schedule committee meetings as far in advance as practicable to allow for House Media Services to adequately staff the physical components of the committee meetings.

III. Chamber Proceedings

A. Voting:

Members are required to notify the Clerk of the House if a Member wishes to be “Excused” from a specific vote or for an entire day of the 2022 Legislative Session. Members who are present but need to be excused are able to use the function on the desk or on the tablet to mark themselves excused. The Office of the Clerk of the House of Representatives has purchased tablets for the use of the Members who will be seated in the Gallery. Each Member seated in these areas will be assigned a tablet that will be programmed specifically for them. These tablets will allow members to (1) register their votes on bills or other questions on the floor, (2) see the vote board on their tablet, and (3) request to speak, when appropriate and in accordance with House Rules.

Voting tablets are to remain at the Member’s seat at all times. Under no circumstances should the voting tablets be removed by a Member from the House Gallery. House rules requiring that a Member must vote their own machine will be in effect as it relates to tablets. A Member assigned to the House Gallery will not be able to cast their vote by telling a staff member of the Clerk’s Office. They must cast their vote from their tablet in their assigned seat.

B. Members Speaking:

In the event that a Member sitting in the House Gallery wishes to speak, in a time frame in accordance with House Rules, he or she should use his or her assigned tablet to press the “RTS” button. In the event that a Member wishes to speak to a bill, present a morning order, or share an announcement with the Chamber, the Member should follow

the standard procedure to sign up with the House Messenger. Members seated in the House Chamber should follow standard procedures, in accordance with House Rules, to speak.

C. Access to the Chamber and Anterooms:

There will not be a “rope line” set up outside the Chamber doors as there has been previously. Instead, the area outside of the Chamber doors and the area outside of the doors of the Gallery will only be accessible to Members and staff who have floor access. The South Anteroom will not be accessible to the public for any purposes, including photographs. Access to the House Gallery will be treated in the same manner as access to the House floor.

IV. Members’ Offices and Staff

A. Office Protocols:

Personal aides and staff not paid by the Georgia House of Representatives will be allowed to work in House office space at this time. Personal Aids and staff should not direct House staff to perform any task, Members should be the one to direct that action. Members, staff, and visitors should follow the current guidelines of the CDC as it pertains to the wearing of face coverings. Appointments are not required before entry into an office, but are permitted, if desired by the office.

B. Food in the Capitol:

1. *Individual Offices*

In the event that a buffet style meal is provided in an office suite, individuals are encouraged to wear a mask and serve the food instead of each individual serving their own plate.

2. *Anteroom and Chamber (including House Gallery)*

In the event that food is provided in the Anteroom or left on the desks of Members, all items should be individually wrapped or served to the Member by someone in a mask.

V. Meeting Spaces for Outside Groups

Meeting spaces can be reserved by members for outside groups through the standard room reservation process.

VI. Guidance for Employees

Please read the included “Employee Guidance” document.

“EMPLOYEE GUIDANCE”

Requirements for Employees Reporting to the Capitol

Prior to Reporting to Work Today:

Do you have any of the following symptoms?

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

If so, immediately notify your supervisor before heading to work. If any symptom occurs during the day, immediately notify your supervisor. If you have recently been in contact with someone who is diagnosed with COVID-19, immediately notify your supervisor. You are required to test on each scheduled testing day during the Special Session.

In the Office:

- Wash hands with hot water and soap for 20 seconds often, immediately prior to and after eating; after using the restroom; after sneezing or coughing; prior to and after removing a face covering; and prior to leaving the Capitol Complex. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Utilize communication methods other than face to face as often as possible
- Follow the CDC guidelines as it pertains to the wearing of a face covering
- Clean often touched surfaces as often as possible

Any Time You are Not in Your Office:

- Wear your face covering according to the current CDC guidelines
- Wash hands upon return

Face Covering Requirements:

Cloth face coverings should (1) be made of a material that is not transparent and through which light cannot be seen, (2) allow for breathing without restriction, (3) cover the nose and mouth, and (4) be laundered and machine dried after each use. For further information on creating homemade cloth face covering, the CDC website has [instructions](#)